CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

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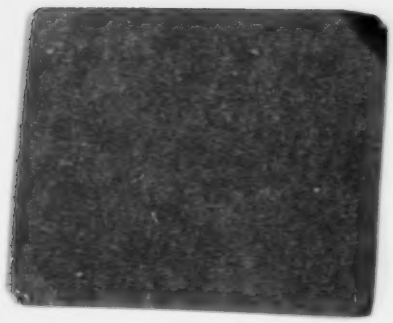
LETTER DATED 11 MARCH 1997 ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS OFFICE IN GENEVA TRANSMITTING A LETTER BY H.E. ZORAN THALER MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF SLOVENIA TO THE 1997 SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

Attached is a letter from H.E. Zoran Thaler, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Slovenia, to the 1997 session of the Conference on Disarmament issued on 11 March 1997.

I would be grateful if this letter could be issued as an official document of the Conference on Disarmament and distributed to all member States and non-member participant States of the Conference.

(Signed): Dr. Anton Bebler
Ambassador
Permanent Representative



Ljubljana, 11 March 1997

Dear Mr President,

Slovenia is a young country that obtained UN membership in May 1992. In the last five years of its independence, Slovenia achieved positive results in the process of political and economic transformation. Increasing cooperation with its neighbours and in the region enabled Slovenia to reach a high degree of economic and political stability. We believe that such a policy should be considered a contribution to lasting stability in the region.

After its successful transformation, Slovenia is now ready to take over not only its responsibility for regional arrangements, but also its share of responsibility for the international peace and stability.

For this reason Slovenia seeks membership in the Conference on Disarmament. Slovenia applied for membership in April 1993, in order to participate actively in the central role the Conference has in developing the infrastructure for disarmament machinery. Moreover, it is one of the strategic goals of Slovenia to join the Conference. We firmly believe that Slovenia is able to meet all expectations and work with other member states so as to give its full contribution to the fulfilment of the demanding tasks which await the Conference on Disarmament.

Disarmament continues to be among the most important areas in which the role of the Conference is fundamental. It can be said that in the recent years the Conference has solidified its leading and coordinating role in this area and proved to be the most important multilateral forum for disarmament affairs. The conclusion and the entry into force of the Chemical Weapons Convention and the elaboration of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty bear witness to that.

The significance of the Conference is a fact which enables small nations like Slovenia to work on equal basis with other nations in the negotiations which lead towards the conclusion of international disarmament agreements. We consider membership in the Conference as a legitimate right of all states which want to present their views on disarmament and take their share of responsibility for a safer world of tomorrow. The enlargement of the Conference will allow even greater representation of views which are of critical importance to humanity.

We are pleased that many other governments share our opinion. The fact that more than 150 states in the UN General Assembly voted in favour of the resolution on the expansion of the Conference on Disarmament (Resolution A/C.1/51/L.1 rew.1) has proved our considerations to be right and widely accepted. Many countries already expressed their support to our application.

Within this context, Mr President, I would like to ask you to give active support to the application of the Republic of Slovenia for full membership in the Conference on Disarmament. My Government would like to contribute substantially to the successful work of the Conference by presenting its views on the issues of critical importance for the international community.

We expect the Conference to address the question of the enlargement as a matter of priority and to facilitate the full and early representation of the remaining applicant States in its work.

Please accept, Mr President, the assurances of my highest consideration.

(Signed): **Zoran THALER**

Minister of Foreign Affairs of Slovenia